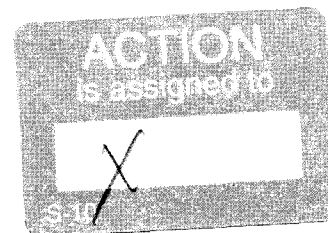


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Michigan
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April, 13, 2004

The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary
Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, SW, Room 10200
Washington, DC 20590

OST-2004-
17343-4/
Correspondence

Re: Proposal of Bishop International Airport ("FNT") for
Small Community Air Service Development Program

Dear Secretary Mineta:

As President of the Michigan Business Travel Association, our statewide organization urges you to approve Bishop International Airport's ("FNT") application for a small community development grant for convenient and low-fare air service to key business destinations on the east coast, especially Washington DC and/or New York city areas.

As you know, Michigan's business travelers are anxious to increase their travel plans and choices. The demand for low-fare service is strong and growing stronger.

There has been significant growth in and business expansion north of Detroit, and many business and residences are finding the convenience of a community airport a much desired alternative to the traffic associated with Detroit's major airport. I personally reside in Bloomfield Hills, and frequently choose Flint for my many business trips. Flint departures save me at least ½ hour even though it is slightly further by distance from my home; one quick ride up I-75 to Flint vs. a crossing the matrix of various side-streets, local freeways and interstates to get to Detroit Metro. Flint is always my first choice, and if service were expanded it could end up being my "only" choice!

The current low-fare choices have resulted in an increase in my business trips and now I can visit more of our customers by staying within my travel budget by traveling through FNT. Because of those savings from low-cost alternatives, business travelers are also traveling from other Michigan airports. Frankly, this is good for the economic development of our state!

While we have enjoyed low-fare options to parts of the country, it is essential for our business travelers that AirTran establish FNT low-fare air service to business markets including the Washington or New York areas. As you stated in a March 10, 2004 speech, "Transportation has never been more important to America's economic future



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than it is right now." Although FNT has grown, business travelers are seeking direct service to critical business markets. While we can help support costs of new service, the Department's assistance is needed to help offset the initial start-up costs related to new East Coast service. Without your assistance, the risks may be too high for any airline to add these essential routes. Low-fare service to Washington or New York would stimulate new traffic, decrease airline ticket prices, and provide expanded travel options. It would also encourage the larger carriers to consider additional markets as Northwest did after AirTran's entry into the Florida market.

By adding another market at FNT, AirTran's presence at FNT would be strengthened. As business people, we understand that AirTran must expand if it is going to become a permanent part of FNT air service. As air carriers and all businesses grow, they can spread out their costs and alternatives, giving us both an even stronger market consisting of newly generated traffic. This traffic would be spurred on by the lower fares, stimulating bookings that would never have been made otherwise. Moreover, as the numbers of flights expand, additional leisure and business travelers visit the community and state. It also creates new business opportunities and expansion. This in turn stimulates important economic growth for the entire state. We are already seeing businesses moving operations and headquarters along the I-75 corridor between Detroit and Flint!

For these reasons, we urge you to approve the FNT application to allow AirTran to add FNT service to the New York or Washington areas.

We look forward to partnering with you to make this a reality. We stand ready to do our part.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jack O. Reynaert, Jr.", is written over a horizontal line.

Jack O. Reynaert, Jr.
President, Michigan Business Travel Association

Cc: Senator Stabenow
Senator Levin
Representative Kildee